

Committee on environmental pollution

1428. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Committee constituted by Government about a year ago to report on alarming picture of environmental pollution in India and health care system has submitted its report to Government;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government have kept the report in cold storage and are not taking any step to implement it;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the steps taken by Government to implement the recommendations of the Committee?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) A Committee on Environment and Health constituted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests has submitted its report covering various aspects of environmental pollution and related health issues. The recommendations include the following:—

- Creation of an Environmental Health Cell in the Ministry.
- Environmental Epidemiological Studies for the development of environmental health data base and information system.
- Creation of National Institute of Health Sciences with regional centers.
- Inter-Ministerial coordination.
- Cooperation and collaboration with national and international institution/agencies.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) An environmental health cell has been constituted in the Ministry for initiating various activities on environmental health

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RAJYA SABHA

including environmental epidemiological studies, training and awareness programmes.

Arms for Wildlife Preservation Department

1429. SHRI ABANI ROY:

SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Wildlife Preservation Department is ill-equipped to conduct raids or to protect the various wildlife sanctuaries;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) whether Government have been actively considering to equip the enforcement teams of Wildlife Preservation Department with arms to conduct raids or to protect the wildlife properties and if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) Protection and conservation of wildlife is the responsibility of the State Governments. Ban on recruitment of forestry and wildlife personnel has adversely affected the protection efforts both within and outside the protected areas. Lack of effective communication network, inadequate mobility and sophisticated arms further compound this situation. There is also need for upgrading skill in intelligence gathering, investigation and prosecution of cases.

(c) Government of India provides financial assistance to the State Governments for procuring arms and other equipment to protect the wildlife.